



CPMS Express

Get on the fast track



FAS Will Provide Advice on NSPS Issues

Field Advisory Services

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On April 30th, the Department of Defense (DoD) launched the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) Human Resources (HR) system for 11,000 employees in Spiral 1.1 organizations. Click [here](#) for a list of organizations included in Spiral 1.1.

The Department's new HR system includes classification, compensation, staffing, workforce shaping, and performance management provisions. Field Advisory Services (FAS) Division specialists in those subject-

matter areas, plus benefits and entitlements, stand ready to support DoD Component HR practitioners when Spiral 1.1 implementation begins.

FAS will continue to fulfill its role as the principal DoD source for technical advice and assistance to field activity HR specialists for the current title 5 HR system. FAS will do likewise for the NSPS HR system. Activity-level HR specialists may contact FAS regarding NSPS issues in the same way as they normally would for issues involving title 5.

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Inside this issue:

Staffing and Development	
<i>Danger Pay & Hardship</i>	
<i>Differentials Overseas</i>	2
DoD Conference	2
New CARE Division Chief	2
Benefits and Entitlements	
TSP "Phishing" Scam	2
BENEFEDS Portal	3
Dental and Vision Coverage	3
Private Life Insurance	
Misrepresented as FEGLI	5
Regionalization & Systems Modernization	
HR Line of Business (LoB)	3
Recertification of DCPDS	4
Defense Leadership & Management Program	
Developmental Assignments Sought	4
Recruitment Assistance	
Career Intern Programs	5
CPMS Employment	5
CPMS Personnel-ity Profile	6

DoD Components Are Briefed on Category Rating

Staffing and Development

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The FAS Division's Staffing and Development Branch co-sponsored a [category rating](#) briefing with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on April 6th at CPMS. Approximately 50 DoD Component Staffing Chiefs and senior HR Specialists attended the two-hour presentation by Daniel M. Fusco, chief of OPM's Recruiting, Examining, and Assessment Group, and Group staff members, who discussed the advantages of category rating and procedures for its use.

This presentation expanded on the initial category rating briefing that CPMS provided last summer. Sharon Stewart, CPMS Deputy Director for Advisory Services, encouraged attendees at the April 6th session to overcome any internal barriers to category rating and experience its benefits for themselves.

Category rating is an alternative method for rating, ranking, and selecting candidates that may be used in the competitive examining process. This alternative serves to in-

crease the number of qualified applicants from which selecting officials can choose while preserving veterans' preference rights. It allows these officials to select applicants in the highest quality category without regard to the "rule of three." In other words, all candidates in the highest quality category are referred, however many there may be.

The DoD category rating [policy](#) is posted on the CPMS Web site, as well as frequently asked [questions](#). The Staffing and Development Branch continues to advise DoD Components on category rating.

This alternative rating, ranking, and selection procedure is authorized for Federal agencies' use by Section 1312 of the Human Capital Officers Act of 2002 (title XIII of the Homeland Security Act). This legislation is codified at title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 3319. Additionally, title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 337, Subpart C, titled "Alternative Rating and Selection Procedures," contains pertinent regulatory provisions.

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State Department Updates Danger Pay Allowances & Hardship Differentials for Overseas Employment

Staffing and Development
[E-mail us](#)

The State Department recently increased danger pay allowance rates to 35 percent for Federal employees who work in Iraq, areas of Afghanistan outside of Kabul, and Karachi, Pakistan. Additionally, State raised foreign post (also known as “hardship”) differential rates to 35 percent for all of Iraq and Afghanistan, and for Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

Danger pay allowances were also raised for more than 20 other locations, mostly in Africa and central and southeastern Asia, and generally to 30 percent. Hardship differential was eliminated at certain posts previously authorized 5 percent rates, including

Keflavik-Grindavik, Iceland and Seoul, Korea.

The State Department Office of Allowances has posted a complete [list](#) of rate changes. Unless otherwise noted on the list, the new rates became effective on March 5th.

Public Law 109-140, titled “State Department Authorities” and enacted in December 2005, is the statutory basis for the recent rate changes. Section 4 of this law, which is codified at 5 U.S.C. 5925 note, allowed the State Department to increase the maximum rates for danger pay and foreign post differentials from 25 to 35 percent.

Danger pay and foreign post differentials are two of the overseas allowances authorized by Chapter 59 of title 5, U.S.C. The State Department administers the allowances, to include setting criteria for their establishment and providing for their use. State publishes these provisions via the Department of State Standardized [Regulations](#).

The State Department authorizes danger pay when it determines that civil insurrection, civil war, terrorism, or wartime conditions threaten physical harm or imminent danger to the health or well-being of a majority of U.S. Government employees officially assigned to a post, foreign

country, or specific area in a foreign country. Danger pay is authorized at rates of 15, 20, 25, and now 30 or 35 percent. The allowance is payable as a percentage of pay, including applicable locality rates, to individuals officially assigned to a post (including temporary duty) for periods of at least four hours.

The State Department authorizes a foreign post differential when it determines that an overseas location involves extraordinarily difficult living conditions, excessive physical hardship, or notably unhealthful conditions affecting the majority of U.S. Government employees assigned to the location. Living costs are not considered in the differential determination.

Foreign post differential is authorized at rates of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and now 30 or 35 percent. The differential is payable as a percentage of pay, including applicable locality rates, to individuals officially assigned to a post who are also eligible for a living quarters allowance. Additionally, the differential is payable to employees on detail to such posts after 42 consecutive days at the post.

Employees receive both danger pay and foreign post differential when the allowances are authorized by the State Department.

DoD Conference

Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy) Patricia S. Bradshaw has [announced](#) the 2006 DoD Worldwide HR Conference, to be held July 17-20 at the DoD Executive Training Center in Southbridge, Massachusetts. DoD Components were invited to suggest topics and presenters from their organizations and asked to identify conference points of contact. This year’s theme is “The Future Is Now.” The Conference will feature programmatic and strategic policy updates, plus workshops to develop new HR competencies. Please save the dates.

New CARE Chief

Debra Tomchek, CPMS Deputy Director for Program Support, has announced the selection of Jeffrey L. Nelson as Chief, Civilian Assistance and Re-Employment (CARE) Division. He replaced Jeffrey Krouse, who retired.

For the last five months, Mr. Nelson was CARE Deputy Division Chief. Previously, he served on the Air Staff for six years. His wide-ranging experience includes base-level and overseas assignments in compensation, staffing, employee and labor relations, affirmative employment, and performance management. His background “made him eminently qualified,” Ms. Tomchek said. “I am very pleased that he agreed to accept the position.”

Beware of TSP “Phishing” Scam

Benefits and Entitlements
[E-mail us](#)

Some Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) participants have recently received e-mail appearing to be from the TSP that attempted to trick participants into providing personal information (Social Security number, TSP personal identification number, and credit card and banking information). Presumably, the intent was identity theft. For details, visit the TSP Web [site](#).



BENEFEDS Portal Eases Enrollment in Voluntary Benefits

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Employees and annuitants will enjoy “one-stop shopping” for enrollment in voluntary benefits, i.e., those with no Government contribution: the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP), the Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS), and soon, the new Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). OPM recently [announced](#) a Government-wide BENEFEDS Portal, as follows:

- ♦ A Web site will let employees and annuitants

sign up for dental and vision plans;

- ♦ Since the Department is participating in FSAFEDS, DoD employees can also enroll online in this program (annuitants are ineligible for FSAFEDS); and
- ♦ Employees and annuitants need not re-enter their demographic information to enroll in more than one voluntary benefits program.

Personal information and plan selections are accessible with a secure login and password. After enrolling, individuals can use the BENEFEDS Portal to up-

date personal information, make permissible changes anytime (e.g., qualifying life events), make open season changes, and download program information.

Additionally, the BENEFEDS Portal contains a new payroll/billing administration system. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service and other agencies' payroll providers will no longer have to deal with various carriers.

The BENEFEDS Portal is being implemented in three phases. The first began with the FSAFEDS 2005 open season for the 2006 plan

year. Phase II will start with the FEDVIP 2006 open season for the 2007 plan year. All FEDVIP enrollments will originate at the Portal.

The BENEFEDS Portal will include a link to the FLTCIP Web site beginning in Phase II. FLTCIP will not be part of the BENEFEDS enrollment system, because the FLTCIP application process differs greatly from those of other voluntary benefits programs.

Phase III will take effect in time for the FSAFEDS 2007 open season for the 2008 plan year.

First Dental & Vision Open Season Is Slated for November

Benefits and Entitlements [E-mail us](#)

Open season for dental and vision insurance under FEDVIP will begin in November, with coverage effective in December, according to OPM's revised timeline. The Federal Employee Dental and Vision Benefits Enhancement Act of 2004, Public Law 108-496 (December 23, 2004), authorized this new supplemental coverage.

The law established a three-tiered premium structure—traditional Self and Self and Family, as well as Self Plus One. Single parents and couples with no children or grown children could save with Self Plus One, because OPM has specified that:

- ♦ Self will have the lowest premium;
- ♦ Self Plus One should cost no more than *twice* that amount; and
- ♦ Self and Family should cost no more than *three times* that amount.

Other insurance products in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) do not provide a Self Plus One option.

In 2005 OPM invited potential insurance carriers to submit proposals, which have now been received, for national and regional dental and vision plans. Negotiations will lead to selection in May of a reasonable number of carriers. Successful proposals will be those with the greatest overall

value to Federal employees and annuitants, as determined by cost and other criteria.

Some current FEHBP plans already provide a degree of dental and vision coverage. They can continue to do so, but soon employees may choose to obtain the supplemental coverage as well.

The authorizing law requires employees to bear the full cost of supplemental coverage, with no employer contribution. However, the Government-wide negotiations may well result in lower premiums than would otherwise be available, and (as with other FEHBP offerings) employees may pay the premiums with pre-tax dollars.

HR Line of Business

Regionalization & Systems Modernization [E-mail us](#)

OPM has released the first issue of *HR Line of Business* (LOB), a new communications letter that provides insight into the HR LOB and its impact on Federal HR management. The Department is one of five Federal HR LOB shared service centers, so we encourage our readers to review the new [periodical](#) and see how this Federal initiative is developing.

HR LOB seeks to develop business-driven, common solutions for business processes and/or technology-based services that can be made available across the Federal Government. Our prior [article](#) explains the origin and fundamentals of HR LOB.



DCPDS Complies with DoD Information Assurance Controls

Regionalization & Systems Modernization [E-mail us](#)

The Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS), the DoD enterprise civilian HR system supporting more than 800,000 civilian employees worldwide, uses an information assurance (IA) process that minimizes risk and secures personal information in accordance with Federal laws and DoD regulations.

IA is of paramount importance in HR management and the information technology (IT) that supports it. IA operations must protect and defend information and information systems and ensure their availability, integrity, authentication, and confidentiality. Further, IA must provide a way to restore information systems,

while incorporating protection, detection, and reaction capabilities.

The foundation of the DCPDS IA process is the Systems Security Authorization Agreement (SSAA). This document identifies how a system is to be operated, maintained, and sustained, focusing on how the system relates to IA requirements.

Whenever an operational change is made to the system, a security recertification is required to continue operating the system. (Reference Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 5200.40, *DoD Information Technology Security Certification and Accreditation Process (DITSCAP)*, December 30, 1997.) Recertifi-

cation aims to ensure that systems comply with all current and applicable IA controls, as identified in DoDI 8500.2, *Information Assurance (IA) Implementation*, February 6, 2003.

CPMS has just completed a yearlong, comprehensive recertification of DCPDS by:

- ♦ Reviewing existing system certification and accreditation documentation;
- ♦ Testing the system and its subcomponents for compliance with DoD IA controls;
- ♦ Researching any needed actions;
- ♦ Applying and testing corrective actions; and
- ♦ Documenting the results of the system recertification process.

The systems security team performed the DCPDS security review and security tests and evaluations, and also reviewed the SSAA for currency, completeness, and compliance with DoD security requirements. Team members included the DCPDS information assurance manager (IAM), the information assurance officer, and systems and network administrators. Additionally, an independent IA consultant reviewed the DCPDS recertification processes.

CPMS Director Brad Bunn is the designated approving authority (DAA). After reviewing the IAM's report and supporting evidence in the SSAA, he determined that residual security risks had been sufficiently mitigated and were acceptable.

He granted full accreditation to DCPDS on March 5th. This security accreditation is the DAA's formal declaration that adequate security controls have been implemented and the system is operating at a satisfactory level of security.

An SSAA is performed at least every three years or when a significant change is made to its operating environment. Once the DCPDS SSAA is published, the documentation is provided to each DCPDS Component customer, which performs similar testing and documentation for the Component DCPDS environment.

DLAMP Seeks Developmental Assignments

Defense Leadership and Management Program [E-mail us](#)

The Defense Leadership and Management Program (DLAMP) seeks developmental assignments for its participants. DLAMP develops senior civilian leaders with a broad, DoD-wide perspective and strong leadership and management skills. Participants are encouraged to take on progressively responsible work experiences in order to apply what they have learned and enhance their effectiveness as leaders. To that end, we are looking for Defense managers to identify poten-

tial short-term assignments that will enable participants to expand their knowledge of DoD's mission, enhance their leadership skills, and achieve results. Joint and interagency assignments are particularly valuable.

Many of those seeking developmental assignments are War College graduates. All were identified as having strong potential for senior leadership positions. Participants will bring new perspectives as well as considerable expertise and enthusiasm to their assignment and the mission of the organization. Four- to 12-

month assignments are sought at grades GS-13 through 15, or equivalent, in the continental U.S. There is no cost to an organization to host an assignment. Funding to support assignments in fiscal year (FY) 2007 is subject to the successful evaluation of this pilot program and funds availability.

HR Specialists are asked to distribute this announcement widely to serviced organizations likely to have appropriate positions. For more information or to host an assignment, please call DLAMP at (703) 696-9623 (DSN 426-) or e-mail us.



Intern Programs Are Widely Used for Entry-Level Jobs

Recruitment Assistance
Division [E-mail us](#)

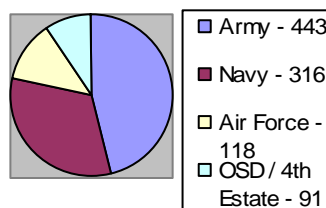
A recent Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) [study](#) found that, since its inception in 2000, the Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP) has become the Government's largest noncompetitive hiring program for entry-level jobs at the General Schedule (GS) 5, 7, and 9 grade levels, and equivalent positions. Executive Order 13162, dated July 6, 2000, authorized agencies to hire interns for permanent positions through FCIP and required OPM to develop program [procedures](#). The program proved to be a great success. During the first year of operation, Federal agencies hired approxi-

mately 400 interns through FCIP. The number increased to about 7,000 in FY 2004.

The Defense Career Intern Program ([DCIP](#)) is the DoD implementation of the overarching FCIP. DCIP is designed to help DoD Components quickly recruit exceptional individuals in various occupations at the specified levels. Components can use the program to hire employees at GS-5, 7, or 9 (and equivalent) or other trainee level appropriate for the program. Otherwise, OPM approval is required.

There is no requirement to announce these vacancies. However, veterans' preference rules do apply.

In FY05, 968 interns were appointed through DCIP. DoD Components used DCIP to hire interns into career fields such as Materiel Maintenance Management, HR, Education Services, Information Management, Intelligence, Engineering, Transportation, and many more. A Component breakout appears below:



FY05 DCIP Appointments

DCIP's speed and ease of hiring have fueled the pro-

gram's popularity. While recruiting on campus and at conferences, Components can open a one- or two-day announcement to cover résumés received during these events. For example, a Military Service major command with a large civilian population is now using DCIP to hire 70 individuals into its Fellows Program, with all new hires projected to enter on duty by July.

While the Federal program has been highly successful in hiring interns from colleges and career fairs, MSPB recommended in its report that agencies look beyond these venues when recruiting interns. The average age of FCIP is 30, MSPB noted—well above college age. To allow for more diverse recruitment, agencies could also use paid ads, recruiting services that charge a fee, and employee and alumni referrals.

MSPB also recommended that agencies use the program's probationary period. Treat the two-year internship as a trial period, MSPB said, rather than automatically converting interns to the competitive service.

Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Private Life Insurance Is Being Misrepresented as FEGLI

Benefits and Entitlements
[E-mail us](#)

Pop quiz! What is "faux FEGLI"? Guitarist Bo Diddley's cousin; words to a golden oldie, *The Name Game* ("Bonana fanna faux FEGLI"); or an insurance agent's dubious sales tactic? If you chose the last answer, go to the head of the class. Some agents have recently contacted Federal agencies or employees, falsely implying their insurance company was sanctioned by OPM, was connected with the Office of Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (OFEGLI), or was part of FEGLI. Here are the facts:

- ♦ FEGLI does not have sales agents. It does not solicit enrollment by phone or in person, at work or at home.
 - ♦ The only Government-wide group life insurance program authorized by OPM is FEGLI.
 - ♦ Neither OFEGLI nor OPM endorses any privately sponsored life insurance plan.
 - ♦ OPM does not authorize private companies to solicit at Federal agencies.
 - ♦ FEGLI premiums are withheld from employees' salaries. A request from a life insurance company to establish a different method of payment (e.g., voluntary allotment) means the product is outside the FEGLI program.
 - ♦ Even if an agent says the life insurance product is "supplemental" to the program, it is *not* connected with FEGLI.
- Employees may purchase life insurance through a private company or FEGLI, but they need to know which is which. Please help get the facts out to employees about these important issues, so no one will be misled by a deceptive new version of the name game.

CPMS Employment

CPMS vacancies are posted on USAJOBS. To access employment opportunities for status candidates, click [here](#).

For other CPMS vacancies, click [here](#).



CPMS Personnel-ity Profile

Angela Allgood's Career Spans London, West Berlin, and Washington

“My mother had a fine sense of fashion,” says DLAMP’s Angela Allgood, a native of England. “Mother used to enjoy a British newspaper contest that involved ranking 10 fashion designs from best to worst. The prize was enough money to build a brick house.

“When Mother’s rankings matched the paper’s one week, she was elated. Unfortunately, *that* was the week Dad forgot to mail in her entry! He found the envelope on the shelf in our coat closet. She forgave him, of course,” Angela says with a hint of a smile. “Eventually.”

Fashion was not a high priority for Angela as a young woman, since “First I wore school uniforms and then, police ones.” She served more than three years in the elite Women’s Royal Army Corps Provost of the British Army, with special assignments in central London, Scotland, Yorkshire, France, and West Germany at the height of the Cold War.

“My most exciting police work was in West Berlin. I began my daily commute in the old Olympic Village, where I was living, and then went to the Brandenburg Gate, Checkpoint Charlie, and finally Checkpoint Bravo. Once there, my responsibility was to ensure that British travelers safely navigated the Corridor through East Germany to

Checkpoint Alpha in West Germany. If I hadn’t married, I probably would have remained a police officer.”

But fate intervened: “I met and married my husband, Charles, in West Berlin.” Now retired from the U.S. Army, Charles is employed by the DoD Inspector General’s Office.

Angela became a U.S. citizen in 1973 and soon began her Federal career with the

those not pursuing degrees, we recommend graduate courses in business and public policy to round out their education.

“We strive to encourage more participants to engage in the graduate education opportunities available through DLAMP and thus enhance their skills in preparation for senior DoD positions. By working with colleges and universities throughout the country, we

brand new ocean rod and reel was so intense that the rod broke in two with the very next cast!

“Currently, I am developing a family history for my family in England. I also enjoy visiting Revolutionary and Civil War battlefields in the mid-Atlantic states.”

CAREER BRIEF

EDUCATION. BA in history, University of Alaska, 1979. Master of Arts (MA) in Education—Guidance and Counseling, Rider University, 1982. MA in Management and Supervision, Central Michigan University, 1982. Doctor of Education—Educational Theory, Rutgers University, 1989.

EXPERIENCE. *1970s:* Dental Assistant at Ft. Rucker, AL, and Ft. Wainwright, AK. *1980-2:* Education Services Intern with the Army Training and Doctrine Command. *1982-4:* Education Services Specialist at Fort Dix, NJ. *1984-9:* Supervisory Education Services Specialist in Frankfurt, GE. *1990-3:* GS-12 Employee Relations Specialist at Headquarters, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Washington, DC. *1993-7:* GS-13 Instructional Systems Specialist (Program Manager) at U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Arlington, VA. *1997 to Date:* GS-14 Instructional Systems Specialist with DLAMP.



U.S. Army. A career highlight was her work with the Army Continuing Education Services organization in Frankfurt, Germany, where she managed two Army Education Centers for 5,400 soldiers and dependents. In the early '90s, Angela accepted positions with civilian agencies in the Washington, DC, area. She joined the DLAMP Office in 1997.

“DLAMP now has about 800 participants. I head the Graduate Education Team. We assist students to earn graduate degrees and, for

help students find the right courses to meet their individual needs, generally at local institutions or online.”

Angela’s leisure pursuits include gardening, travel, fishing, and history. “My best fishing story involves catching a 40-pound king salmon in the rapids of Alaska’s Gulkana River during June 1977. He was fresh from the ocean, and I fought him for 22 minutes. My rod was bent double before I could land him on a sandbar in the middle of the river. The strain on my